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illustrations. Here and there sources of information were not the latest accessible, and descriptions which would have been true a number of years ago were not accurate at the time they were written. Illustrations are not always representative or typical. Small experiments of unproved value, in a few instances, are set down as though they bore the seal of general acceptance.

It is worth noting that, at best, such a publication as this cannot remain accurate as an up-to-date statement of facts. It is no sooner off the press than it begins to fall behind the times. New laws are enacted, new ideas put into practice and old discarded. The entire body of charitable effort throughout the world is in a state of flux, and a picture of it at any moment must be a "snapshot," differing in countless details from any preceding or subsequent picture. This obvious fact is mentioned because it tends to minimize the importance of most of the errors which have found place in the book. That all the information in its 715 pages is not brought down to precisely the same date line will seem a smaller mistake with each succeeding year. When we cease trying to make the descriptions in the book fit minutely the comparatively unimportant details of the institutions about us, and come to regard the publication as a comprehensive picture of the charitable activities of the world at the beginning of the twentieth century, we shall appreciate better than now how faithfully, in all important aspects, the great task has been accomplished.

ERNEST P. BICKNELL.

CHICAGO BUREAU OF CHARITIES.

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*Our Own Times: A Continuous History of the Twentieth Century.* Edited by HAZLITT ALVA CUPPY, and a Board of Special Editors. Vol. I, by BONNISTER MERWIN. New York: J. A. Hill & Co. Pp. xv + 453.

The central idea of the enterprise of which this volume is the first fruit may be described as a design to do year by year what Dr. Albert Shaw does month by month in his comments upon current events in the *Review of Reviews*. As the publishers' announcement suggests, the perspective of a single year may turn out to be different from that of a century; and it is equally true that a year will change the assortment of things worth remarking from month to month. Accordingly a volume made by binding together the most sagacious

monthly surveys of a year's events would not displace this history. Even if there were no variations from the general plan of the monthly review, the wider outlook of a year would necessarily reconstruct the material.

The present work is novel, however, in more than its plan of reporting a single year at a time. It has its own classification of the events to be reported. It assumes a theorem about the relative value of historical occurrences, and about the relations in which the events recorded may most profitably be presented. It is an adventure in the making of history upon a sociological presumption, virtually new to historians. That premise is that the instruction to be gained from general history would be most available if the facts were told, not nationally, but in their relations to civilization in general; and, further, that the facts may be assembled most advantageously around four principal human interests, viz.: first, man's interest in *controlling* himself and his surroundings; second, his interest in *learning* more about himself and his surroundings; third, his interest in *improving* himself and his surroundings; fourth, his interest in *enjoying* the beautiful.

Nothing has occurred to shake my belief that the best division of human interests for ordinary purposes is the sixfold grouping—health, wealth, sociability, knowledge, beauty, and rightness. The first three are the chief forms of objective appropriation of the life-conditions; the second three, the subjective forms. While it would be easy to give reasons for preferring this classification to Dr. Cuppy's, his scheme is such an evident improvement upon the conventional historical categories, and it serves so well in arranging the memorable achievements of the year to which the classification is applied, that it would savor of hypercriticism to press the issue.

The present volume is devoted to the year 1901. To indicate most directly the scope of the book, we quote the chapter titles, viz.: "The Keynote of the New Century," "The New American Possessions," "The Trend of National Energies," "The South African War," "The Chinese Problem," "The International Web," "The Year's Legislation," "Conflicting National Elements," "Political Changes," "The Work of the Explorer," "Achievements in Science," "The Work of the Inventor," "The War against Disease," "Religion," "Education," "Miscellaneous Social Changes," "Books and Plays," "Art and Music." An appendix of thirty-eight pages contains: "The Year of Sports," "The Nobel Prizes," "Prominent

Persons Who Died in 1901," "General Statistics," "Financial Statistics," "Railroad Mileage," "Corn and Wheat Crops," "Armaments of the Nations," "Immigration into the United States," "Religious Statistics." There are good maps (*a*) of the Philippine Islands; (*b*) of central and southern Africa; (*c*) of China, Japan, and Korea. There are fifty-three illustrations, nearly all full-page, and the majority of them excellent pictures of persons prominent during the year 1901. The editor had the assistance of sixteen men named as "The Advisory Council." But for a single circumstance, I should say without hesitation that the advice of these men must have increased the value of the book.

It is safe to say that if we had a census of the people who do now or ever will take an interest in the year 1901, we should have the exact number of persons who would feel able to point out inclusions of the less worthy and omissions of the more worthy. I have not yet been able to examine the volume carefully enough to make out my own bill of particulars. Whether I am able later to locate important over- or under-sights, I am satisfied that the history must be accepted on demand as a sheer necessity for everybody who has occasion to refer to recent events. I cannot see how any editorial office, except of the patent-inside variety, can do without it. I already feel toward it very much as I do toward the index that changed my pamphlets from rubbish to equipment. That every reference library must have the series goes without saying. Dr. Cuppy should have the hearty gratitude of every literary worker.

A. W. S.

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*A Modern Utopia.* By H. G. WELLS. Pp. xii + 393. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.50 net.

The visible use of utopias is to make readers temporarily forget their present grievances, and contemplate the program of revolt which they would promote if the imaginary conditions were realized. Nothing is more obnoxious to present human nature than a presumption of social conditions fixed beyond chance of change.

Mr. Wells hardly reckons on being understood as having completed plans and specifications of a perfect world. Like most utopists, he has indicated a series of modifications which in his opinion would increase the aggregate of human happiness. Since tastes differ, it is always an open question whether the result in practice would increase